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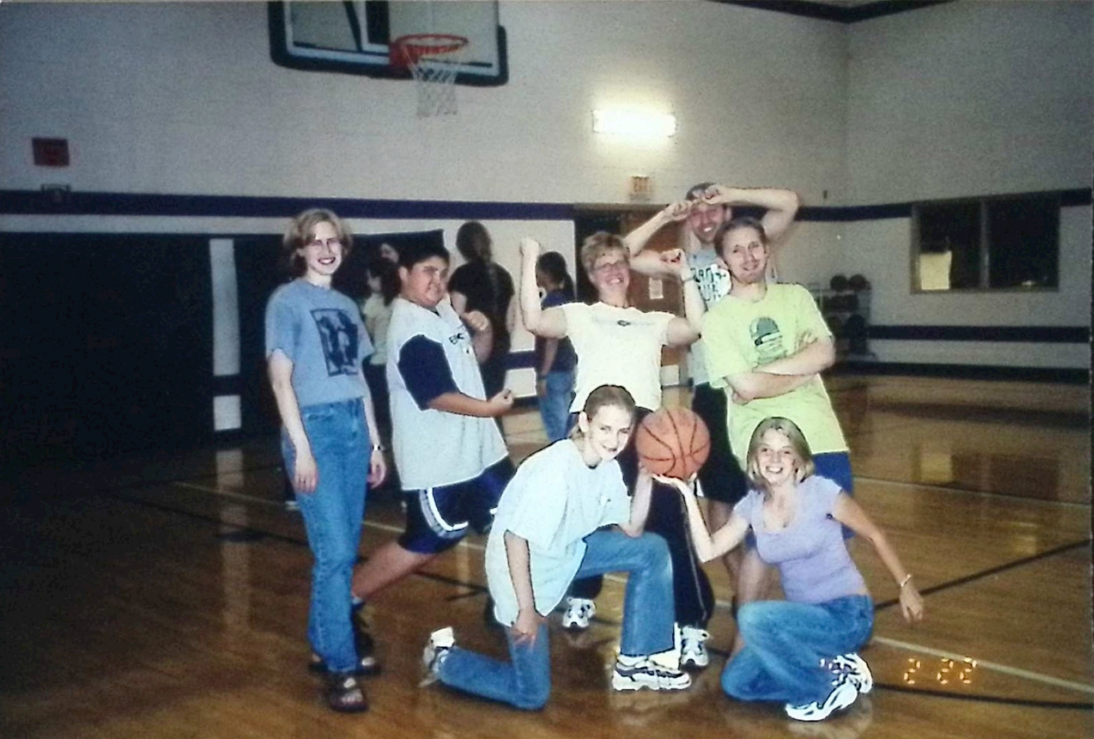
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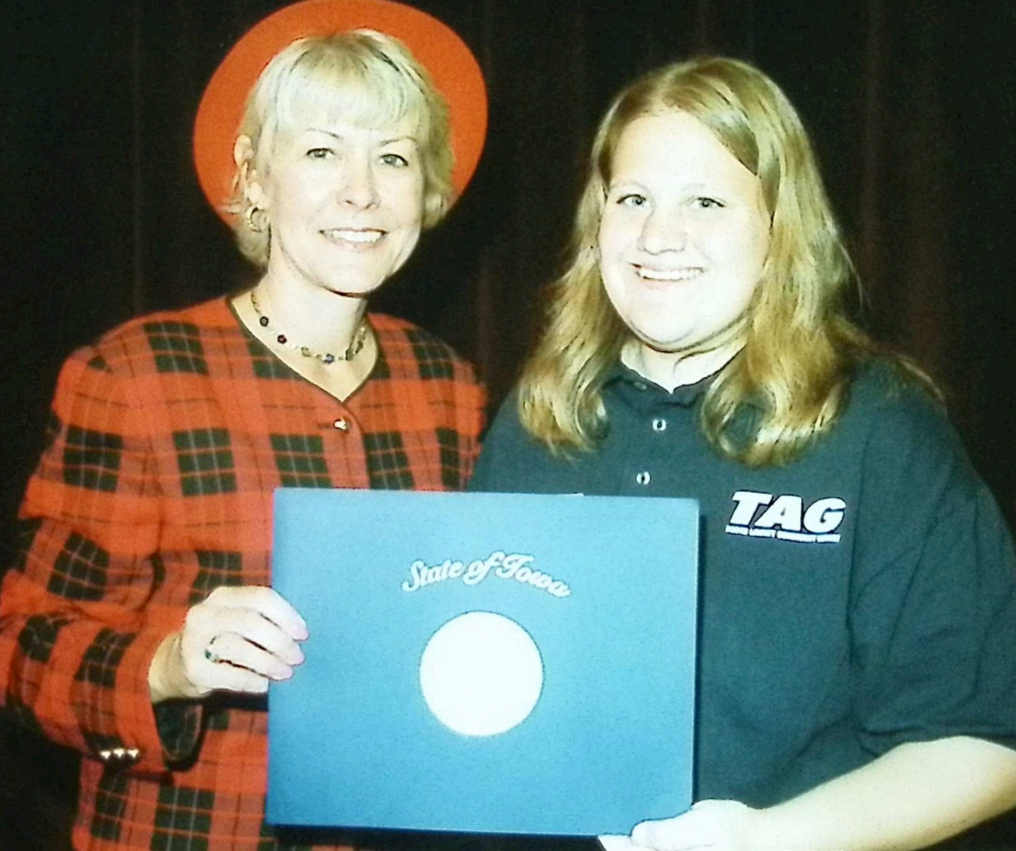
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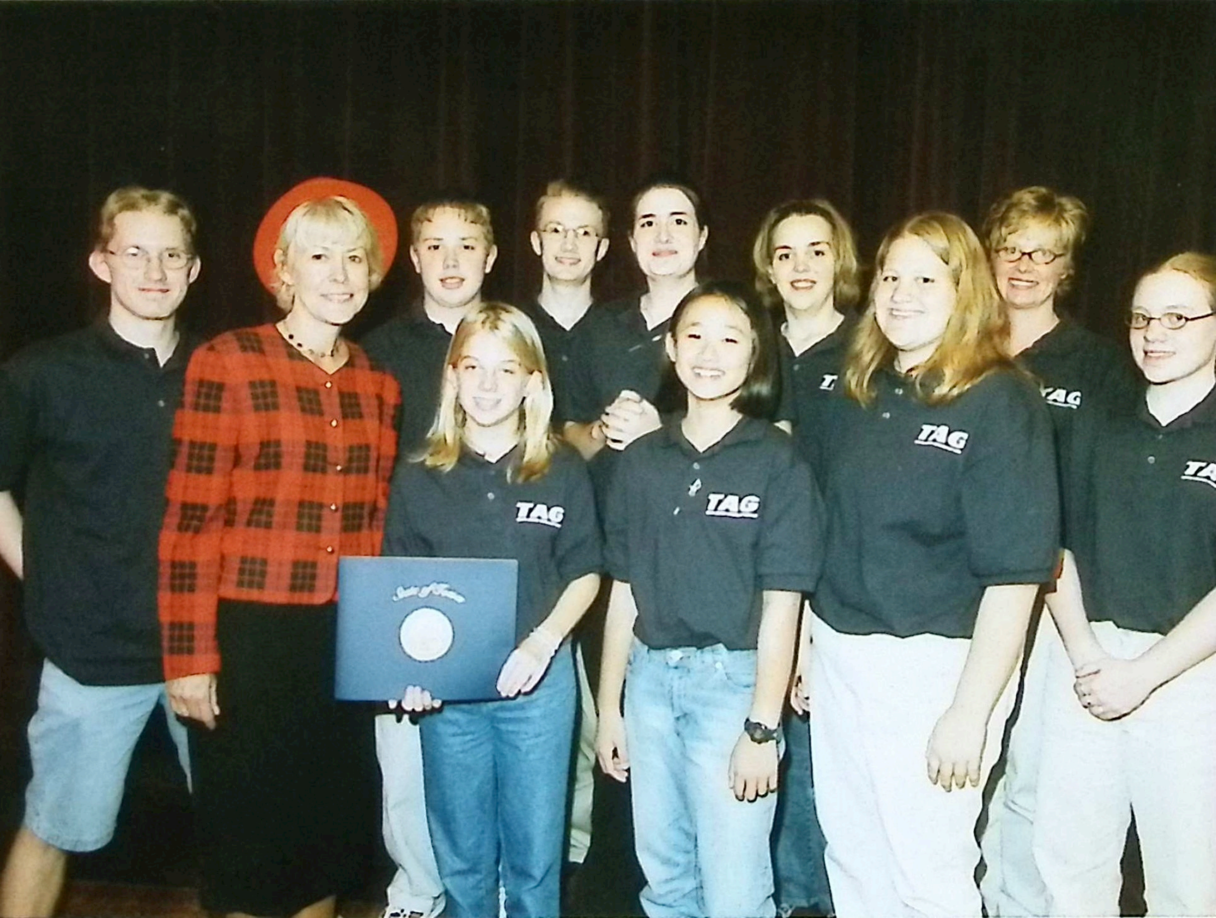
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NORTH LIBERTY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

HARRY & ME AT BARNES & NOBLE
JUNE 21ST 2003

BARNES&NOBLE
BOOKSELLERS

North Liberty Leader

Stephanie Wu (15 yr old) and Katie Malatek (15 yr old), won a digital camera and DVD player, respectively, at the Teen Summer Reading Program this year at the North Liberty Community Library.

August 2, 2004

Off the deep end

Betsy Page, 12, takes a dive during the Teen Summer Reading Program pool party July 24 at the North Liberty Community Center. Turn to page 8 for the story.

North Liberty Leader

Andrea Schubert, Nicole Titus, Krystal Titus and Elisha Andreas hang out on dry land at the Teen Summer Reading Program pool party July 24 at the North Liberty Community Center.

August 2, 2004

North Liberty
Leader

Andrea Schubert, Krystal Titus, and sister Nikki Titus sign the librarian's t-shirt at the final pool party of the Teen Summer Reading Program at the North Liberty Community Library on July 24.

August 2. 2004

Melanie Stewart
Assistant Youth & Teen Services Librarian

North Liberty Snapshot

By Karyl Bonnett
Contributing Writer

WHO: Books have always held a fascination for Melanie S. Stewart. While attending West High School, she volunteered at the North Liberty library. "Whenever I got out of school early, I would come over and bug the staff," laughed Melanie. Fortunately for the library, she was also active in the Teen Advocacy Group that organized and conducted fundraising activities. Her participation and support as advisor still continues. Melanie followed high school with two years at Kirkwood Community College. Next spring she starts her second semester at the University of Iowa with a major in American studies. "American studies is kind of sociology without the statistics," explained Stewart. "It's about people and how society has changed over time."

WHAT: Melanie is the Assistant Youth & Teen Services Librarian at the North Liberty Community Library. "I do storytime Wednesday evenings and help Elaine Reitz with programming for kids in the summer program. I'm especially involved in the programming for teens and the advocacy group."

WHERE: Iowa City was called home until 7th grade when Stewart moved to North Liberty. She and her dog, Maggie, still live in N.L. She has held jobs at Fareway, Lolly's Salon as well as other positions at the library.

WHEN: Melanie started her current position August 1, 2005.

WHY: "I got my foot in the door via a work-study program from Kirkwood. When a part-time position came open I applied for it."

DREAM JOB: "I would probably like to be a clothing or interior designer."

LIKES MOST: "I like being outside, walking, hanging out with my friends and, of course, reading. I like to craft. I never played any sports but I like to watch Iowa football, especially now that I'm going to the university."

N.L. BEST: "I just like watching the community grow. Everybody is really friendly here. I'm getting to the point that everywhere I go I see somebody I know. Even if I don't remember their name, I recognize their face and know them well enough to say 'Hello.'"

N.L. WORST: "Road construction."

BEST N.L. EATS: "I've always liked Rookies and it has been here a long time. I like Eggy's too."

BEST MOVIE: "I'm kind of a chick flick kind of person. I really liked *Dirty Dancing*."

FAVORITE GAME: Monopoly.

FAVORITE NON-FICTION BOOK: *Midnight Assassin* by Thomas Wolf and Patricia Bryan. "It's about a murder case that took place in Indianola, Iowa."

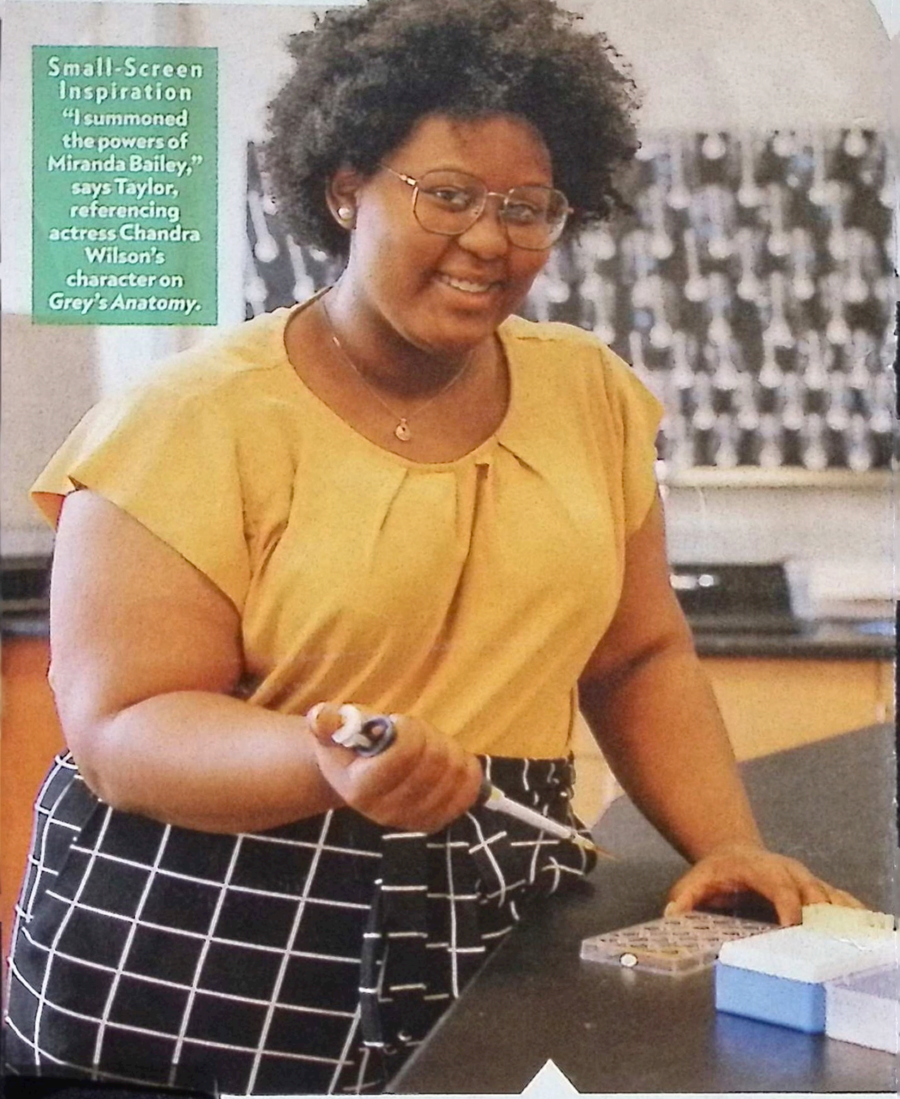
FAVORITE FICTION BOOK: *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* by Ann Brashares. "This is a young adult book."

FAVORITE CHILDREN'S BOOK: *Boris and Bella* by Carolyn Crimi. "I read it for one of my storytimes and loved it."

SOMETHING PEOPLE WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU: "I have a butterfly tattoo on my shoulder blade."

MOST UNUSUAL THING TO HAPPEN ON THE JOB: "I was working the night shift and was shelving. Another library employee was in the backroom. Suddenly I heard some loud running. I didn't think much about it at first. Then I heard the beeping of the back door alarm. I yelled, 'Don't go out the back door,' thinking it was just some kid who didn't know any better. I went up front to see what was going on. After glancing at the front desk I said, 'Oh my gosh! Its gone!' The large water jug that held donations for new computers had been stolen."

NORTH LIBERTY
FUN RUN & WALK



Small-Screen Inspiration "I summoned the powers of Miranda Bailey," says Taylor, referencing actress Chandra Wilson's character on *Grey's Anatomy*.

DEVELOPING LIFESAVING MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Dasia Taylor, 17

In her AP Human Geography class, Dasia Taylor learned that in developing countries, postsurgical infection can often lead to death. Armed with that knowledge—and a healthy obsession with *Grey's Anatomy*—the high school senior from Iowa City made a world-class breakthrough: stitches that change color when wounds become infected. The secret? Beet juice. "It's a natural indicator," she explains. "It reacts when the pH changes." Taylor won local and state-level science fairs and was named a finalist at the Regeneron Science Talent Search, a national competition that tasks young people with solving society's most urgent challenges. Now she's patenting her invention and hoping to set up commercial lab space to continue her research. "These stitches will revolutionize treatment," she says. "My goal is to get them to those who need them." ●

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: STAGLIANO FAMILY(2); CAROLINE BARKER

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NORTHLIB LEADE 75¢
EBRUARY 23, 2017

Creek Girls make history with regional quarterfinal win. See page B1.

Brands clinches second state title over No. 2 Lara of Fort Dodge. See page B1.

CLEAR CREEK AMANA SCHOOL BOARD

Kuehl reacts to 1.1 percent increase in state aid

Staffing levels to remain steady

By Chris Umscheld
North Liberty Leader

AMANA– Governor Terry Branstad signed a bill authorizing a 1.1 percent increase in State Supplemental Aid (SSA) for Iowa's school districts on Wednesday, Feb. 8. Branstad had proposed a 2 percent increase in school funding over what districts received last year, however Republicans insisted with lower income projected by the Revenue Estimating Committee, that 1.1 percent is all the State can afford. The bill provides an additional $40 million to Iowa schools for the next fiscal year, starting on June 1.

Democrats, the minority party following the November elections, had initially called for a 4 percent increase but later attempted an amendment to the bill to meet the Governor's 2 percent.

Clear Creek Amana Community School District Superintendent Tim Kuehl told the school board at a Wednesday, Feb. 8, work session that the district needs a consistent 3-4 percent annual increase.

The disparity between parties and even State Capitol chambers is not uncommon. In 2015 Iowa Democrats called for a 6 percent increase in SSA, also commonly referred to as "Allowable Growth," while Republicans held the line at 1.25 percent. In 2016 Gov. Branstad called for a 2.45 percent increase while the Republican-controlled House wanted 2 percent and the Democrat-controlled Senate sought 4 percent. A 2.25 percent compromise was reached.

The increase provides an additional $73 per student, increasing the State's cost per pupil from

State aid:
Continued on page A6

CITY OF TIFFIN

2017 CCA Youth Little League registration open

TIFFIN– Registration is now open for the 2017 Youth Little League Season. Be part of a 40-year tradition by joining others on the diamond this year. Leagues are offered for pre-K through seventh grade. Regular registration is open until Feb. 28, after which late fees will incur. More information is available at tiffin-iowa.org.

CITY OF NORTH LIBERTY

Social service project funding application due March 1 at city hall

NORTH LIBERTY– The City of North Liberty is seeking applications for social service programs and projects, focusing on innovative, new projects serving North Liberty. Applications for the $23,500 earmarked for this program are due March 1.

In addition to supporting agencies and programs such as the Crisis Center of Johnson County, Elder Services, the Domestic Violence Intervention Program, the Rape Victims Advocacy Program, Table to Table, Shelter House, Any Given Child and North Liberty Senior Dining, the City of North liberty has funded innovative programs including: the Iowa State Extension's 4H Growing Power club, which brought at-risk junior high school students to the North Liberty Community Pantry, where they gained leadership and hands-on skills about

NORTH LIBERTY

A womb of their own

North Liberty Community Library unveils lactation room

By Janet Nolte
North Liberty Leader

NORTH LIBERTY– "You guys are burning up the mommy wire."

Such feedback from patrons of the North Liberty Community Library is exactly what Director Jennie Garner and her staff like to hear in response to the innovative programming and resources they have been developing for young families and children.

"That's exciting to us because it means word is getting out on what we're doing here," said Garner.

On Tuesday, Feb. 14, a

Community Partnership for Protecting Children's Kites for Kids festival, which provides free kites for kids to fly in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month; and Children's Center Charities,' which providing bicycle riding classes for special needs children.

The City Council plans to make its funding decision at its March 14 meeting and requests applicants be present to answer questions. The funding, which deemphasizes personnel support, is available in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017.

The application is available to download and at City Hall. Applicants are encouraged to contact Assistant City Administrator Tracey Mulcahey at 319-626-5712 or tmulcahey@northlibertyiowa.org before completing the application.

Storytime returns to NLTV every Wednesday

NORTH LIBERTY– Reading stories to your young ones just got more exciting! Join the North Liberty Community Library for Storytime every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. If you can't make it, North Liberty Television has you covered. You can watch Storytime on NLTV at 7:30 a.m. weekdays on South Slope (Channel 268) and Mediacom (Channel 5). Also visit our YouTube Channel to watch past episodes and other original content from NLTV.

For more information and other storytime options, visit the North Liberty Community Library's website.

Solar energy dashboard now online

NORTH LIBERTY– Last year, the city began seeking proposals to replace at least 60 percent– and ideally 80 percent or more– of the power needs for certain public facilities, and this past fall, began using solar power for the parks, streets and fire department facilities.

In less than four months, these three new arrays have powered the equivalent of 58,613.15 light bulbs for a day and saved 13,597.66 kg of carbon dioxide emissions, the equivalent of planting more than 750 trees.

The public can now monitor the energy produced on these facilities. Online dashboards are now available for the arrays on the parks department shop, the streets department shop and the fire station.

was delivered to young families when the library unveiled its new lactation room. The project was sponsored by Mercy Hospital in Iowa City, who enlisted the help of partners Rohrbach Associates, McComas-Lacina and Merit Electric.

"Part of Mercy's mission is to improve the health and well-being of the community. This is a perfect example of just that, giving back to the community of North Liberty," said Casey Greene, vice-president of support services at Mercy Iowa City.

Iowa City artist Bepple Weiss created the vibrant mural that decorates the outside of the lactation room. A vinyl wrap depicting five of seven panels from the original 28-by-7-foot mural that hangs in Mercy Hospital of Iowa City were reproduced by Nesper Sign Advertising. (photos by Janet Nolte)

"I'm extremely excited with how it turned out, excited to be involved with Mercy and able to give back to the library here an asset that is community-building to use for years to come," he added.

From concept to actualization, the construction of the lactation room happened quickly, thanks to Mercy, whose mission of excellent birth and maternity care dovetails with key programming initiatives of the library.

"They have been incredible partners. It was a real whirlwind," said Garner.

MEETING A NEED

"We had all these babies coming into the library with their moms and dads, and we had people asking us if we had a space for them to nurse or to use a breast pump."

The frequency of that request– multiple times a week, sometimes daily– prompted Jennifer Jordebrek, assistant director and leader of the library's Womb Literacy project, to investigate the options to fulfill the need for a lactation space in the library. Jordebrek's online research turned up a portable, pod-type room often used in stadiums and airports.

"We went to Mercy last fall and asked if they'd be willing to work with us as a sponsor for a lactation

Unveiling:
Continued on page A2

Left: Family Services Librarian, Emily O'Sheridan-Tabor holds tiny library patron, Hazel Harrison, the daughter of North Liberty librarian Melanie Harrison and her husband Josh. North Liberty resident Briana Brim attended the unveiling ceremony with her 6-week-old son, Shayden.

South Slope rallies for Camp Courageous, encourages other companies to join

NORTH LIBERTY– Employees at South Slope Cooperative Communications, headquartered in North Liberty, are coming together to raise funds for Camp Courageous and now extending the challenge to other organizations in the Corridor.

The cause is personal for an employee of South Slope whose son has benefited greatly from his time spent at Camp Courageous. When news spread at South Slope about Camp Courageous' fundraising needs, employees rallied to help.

"We are raffling off a paid day off and all proceeds will go to Camp Courageous. For every five dollars employees donate, they get their name entered into the raffle one time," said South Slope CEO Chuck Deisbeck. "Additionally, we are matching up to $500 as a company. The contest is still in motion and we have already raised $1,715!"

Camp Courageous serves over 7,000 individuals with disabilities each year. The nonprofit organization is in the midst of a massive fundraising effort to replace their current water system that is antiquated and can no longer fulfill the growing needs and population of Camp Courageous. Their current system does not meet the new standards set by the DNR.

"We have been blown away by the goodwill and excitement of our team members about this effort," said Deisbeck. "We want to extend this fundraising suggestion out to other companies and hope that it will help with Camp Courageous' Waste Water Treatment Project."

For Camp Courageous, the updated waste water system means the difference between clean, pure water and polluted, contaminated water. Donations can be made at www.campcourageous.org.

WEEKEND WEATHER:

Saturday: PARTLY CLOUDY, WINDY
High: 33° - Low: 20°

Sunday: CHANCE OF WINTRY MIX
High: 40° - Low: 24°

INSIDE:

OPINION A3
COLLEGE NOTES A5
NLTV A5
SPORTS B1
CROSSWORD B6

PEOPLE NOTES

Johnson County woman wins $50,000 lottery prize

Becky Eister claims top prize in 'Super Crossword' Scratch Game

Becky Elster, of Oxford.

CLIVE– A Johnson County woman claimed a $50,000 lottery prize.

Becky Eister, of Oxford, claimed the 11th of 43 top prizes, of $50,000, available in the lottery's "Super Crossword" scratch game.

Eister bought her winning ticket at The Depot, 221 W. Marengo Rd. in Tiffin, and claimed her prize Feb. 10 at the lottery's regional office in Cedar Rapids.

Super Crossword is a $5 scratch game. More details about how to play this game, and the number of prizes still up for grabs in it can be found on the Iowa Lottery's website, www.ialottery.com.

Unveiling

(Continued from page A1)

room," Garner recalls. "They called us back and did us one way better."

"We really like the idea of this project, but we're not real excited about the product," a Mercy representative told Garner. "We want to know if you'd be willing to let us bring out an architect to look at the library to see if there's something we could do more permanently in this space."

"So it went from thinking about having a curtain drawn that people could nurse behind, to having a pod, to what you see today," said Garner.

The new lactation room is part of the library's strategic plan that seeks to serve the needs of families and the youngest members of the community, a demographic that continues to grow.

"We have lots of new families in town. I kind of joke around that half of our population is under the age of 10 and the other half is pregnant," said Garner.

According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, 421 babies were born in North Liberty in 2015, which recorded a population of 15,931 for the same year. Increasingly, that demographic has been finding its way to the library to participate in a variety of programs, including five story time sessions per week and many other family friendly activities for moms, dads and tots.

As part of its Womb Literacy initiative, the library offers a range of fun and useful programs geared toward expecting moms and dads as well, including a Stork Story Time podcast and the annual Baby Fair. The 2K Waddle Walk for pregnant women, a Read to the Bump fundraiser, will take place Sunday, April 23. Check out the library's web page for details.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

CCA Mini Dance Marathon March 3

TIFFIN– This year, Clear Creek Amana (CCA) is hosting the 4th annual Mini Dance Marathon, in conjunction with the University of Iowa (UI) Dance Marathon, on Friday, March 3, from 7-10 p.m. at the high school. One hundred percent of funds raised will go to children at the UI hospital battling cancer, and their families. All ages are welcome to attend, and admission is $5 at the door.

Money raised from dance marathon goes to pay for things such as items to make the kids' hospital stays more enjoyable (books, toys, video games, etc.), wigs for the children who have lost hair, gas cards and parking fees for family members, and funeral fees for those families who sadly lose their children to cancer.

If you can't make it to the event, you can still donate at https://ia-clearcreekamana-lite.intouchreceipting.com/.

NL Optimists host pancake breakfast March 4

NORTH LIBERTY– The Optimist Club of North Liberty will host its 44th annual pancake breakfast from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 4, in the North Liberty Community Center gymnasium, 520 W. Cherry St.

Proceeds will benefit more than a dozen North Liberty youth programs, as all Optimist clubs have a mission to be "friends of youth." In 2015, the North Liberty Optimists donated about $25,000 to support about 20 North Liberty youth activities, including the free summer lunch program for kids at the North Liberty Recreation Center's egg hunt.

The breakfast– featuring pancakes, eggs, sausage, orange juice, milk and coffee or tea– is the North Liberty club's largest annual fundraiser. Tickets are $6 for adults and $2 for kids ages 3-10. Admission is free for children under age 3.

For more information about the club, including membership and its popular Avenue of Flags program, visit nloptimist.org online or search for "North Liberty Optimists" on Facebook.

Register for NLYBS through March 3

NORTH LIBERTY– Registration for the North Liberty Youth Baseball and Softball's (NLYBS) 25th anniversary season is open. Sign up your child or children at www.eteamz.com/NLYBS by March 3.

Leagues are available for boys and girls age 4 through eighth grade. Call the NLYBS hotline at 319-248-1283 with questions or check the FAQ page on the NLYBS website. Scholarships are available.

New this year is First Grade Baseball, and Third Grade Rookie players will have the opportunity to pitch. Umpires will also be needed, but must be at least 14 years old. Training is provided.

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Representatives from the community partners who sponsored the design and construction of the North Liberty Community Library's (NLCL) new lactation room attended the unveiling on Feb 14. Left to right: Doug Neale, Library Board of Trustees; Will Downing, Rohrbach Associates Architects; Jennie Garner, Director of NLCL; Jack Fliehler, Project Manager at McComas-Lacina; Joe Brinson, Director of Engineering at Mercy; Casey Greene, Vice-President of Support Services at Mercy; Denton Williams, Carpenter at McComas-Lacina; Jennifer Jordebrek, Assistant Director of NLCL. (photo by Janet Nolte)

NORTH LIBERTY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

BABIES & TOTS PROGRAMS

My Baby Storytime– Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.
Storytime– Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.
PJ Storytime – Thursdays, 7 p.m.
Tot Time– Fridays, 10:30 a.m.
Family Storytime– Saturdays, 11 a.m.

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS (K-6)

Super Tuesdays– Tuesdays, 4:15-5:15 p.m.
Come and go activities. No registration required.

- Crafternoons (Feb. 28)– string heart

Tweendom (grades 4-6)– Thursdays, 3-4 p.m.
All activities are come and go. No registration required.

- Cooking (Feb. 23) – Cupcake Wars

Flying Needles– Saturdays, 2 p.m.
Crafting group for grades 5-12. Knit, crochet, and weave with other crafters. Limited extra supplies are available but crafters are encouraged to bring their own when possible to ensure ability for all to participate.

TEEN PROGRAMS

Flying Needles– Saturdays, 2 p.m.
Crafting group for grades 5-12. Knit, crochet, and weave with other crafters. Limited extra supplies are available but crafters are encouraged to bring their own when possible to ensure ability for all to participate.

Teen After Hours– Friday, Feb. 24, 5-6 p.m.
Play games throughout the library during this teen ONLY after hours program.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Sociable Seniors (coffee and social hour)– Mondays, 10 a.m.
Stitching Around (needle crafting)– Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

BOOK CLUBS

All book clubs are open to the public and multiple copies of the books are available on a first-come basis for checkout at the library.

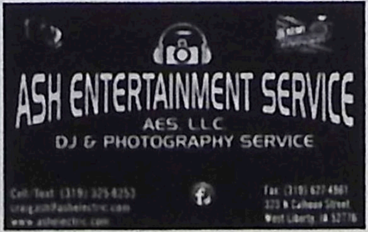
Last Tuesday of the Month Book Club– Tuesday, Feb. 28
This month's read is Finn, by Jon Clinch.

TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

Do Drop In – Thursday, Feb. 23, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.
Drop in time set aside for tech help.

One-on-One Computer Help– available by appointment
Please contact Janet at 319-626-5777 or email jlubben@northlibertyiowa.org to schedule.

Find the current program brochure at the library and online at www.northlibertyiowa.org or call 319-626-5701.



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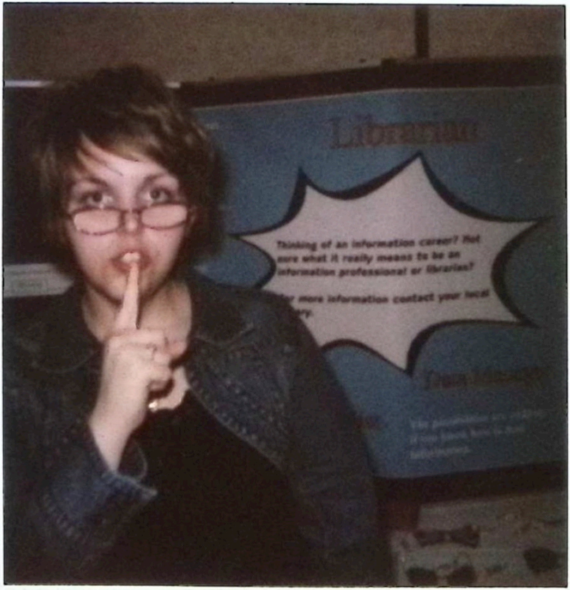
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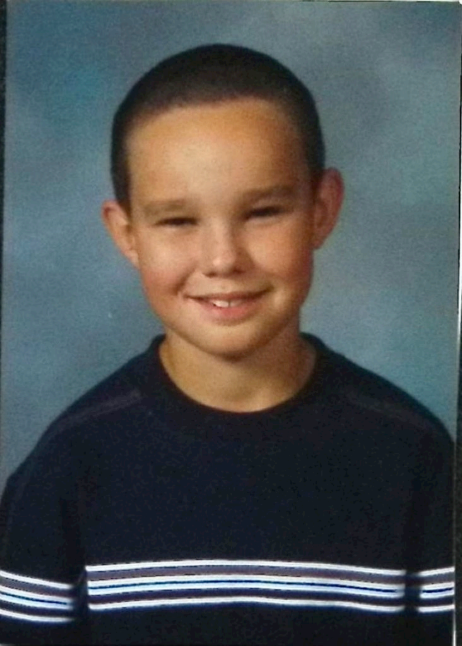

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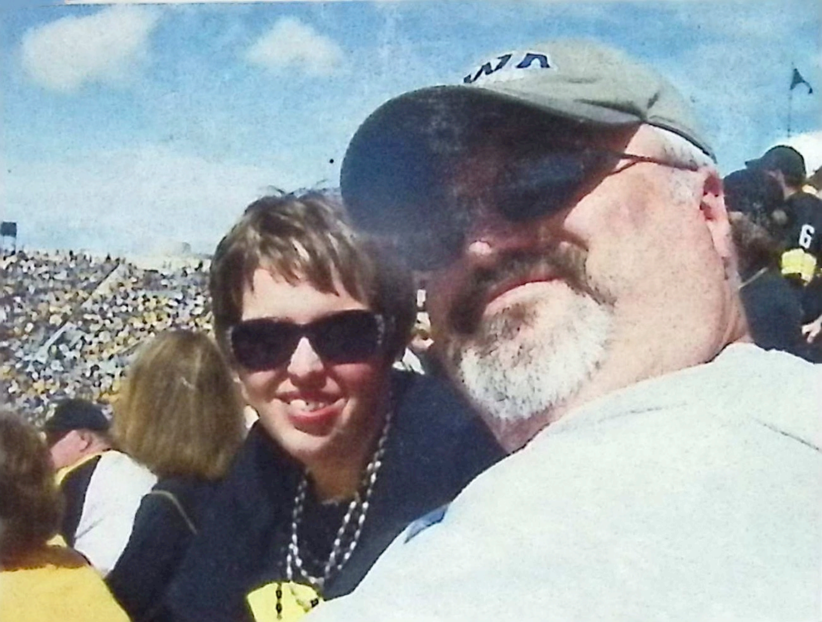

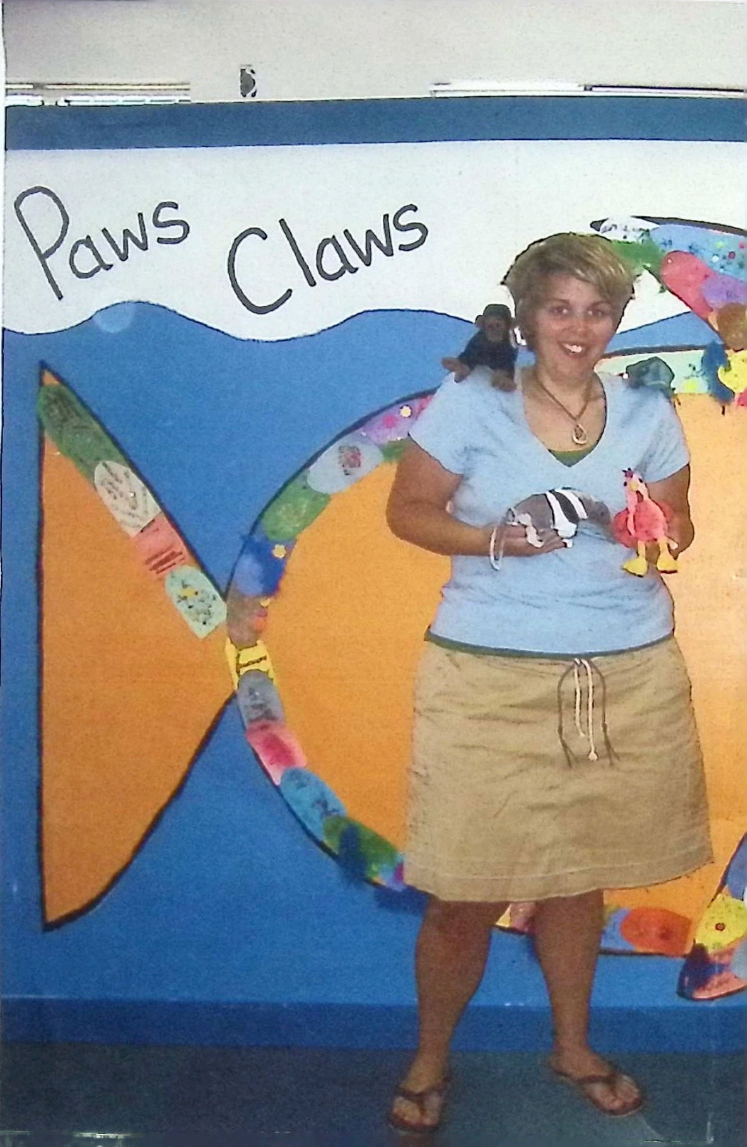
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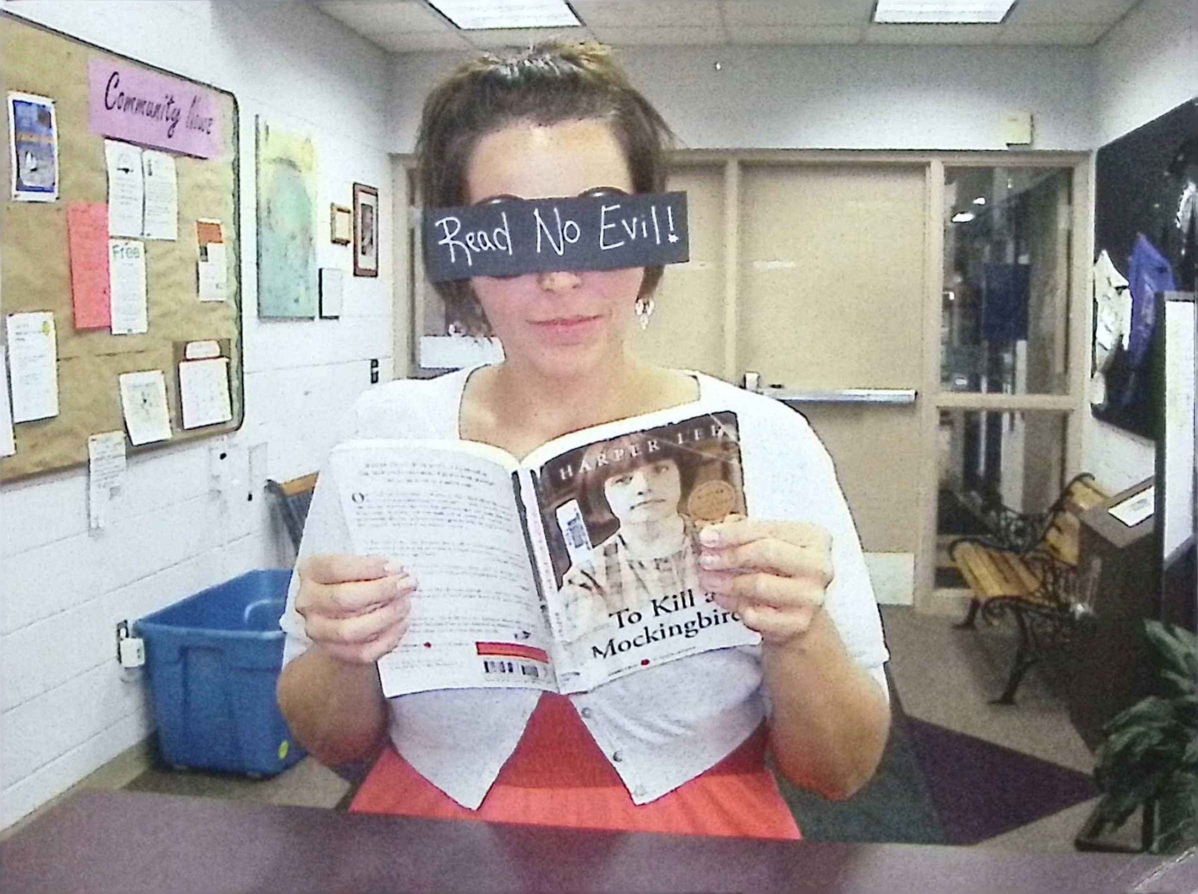
Scales & Tales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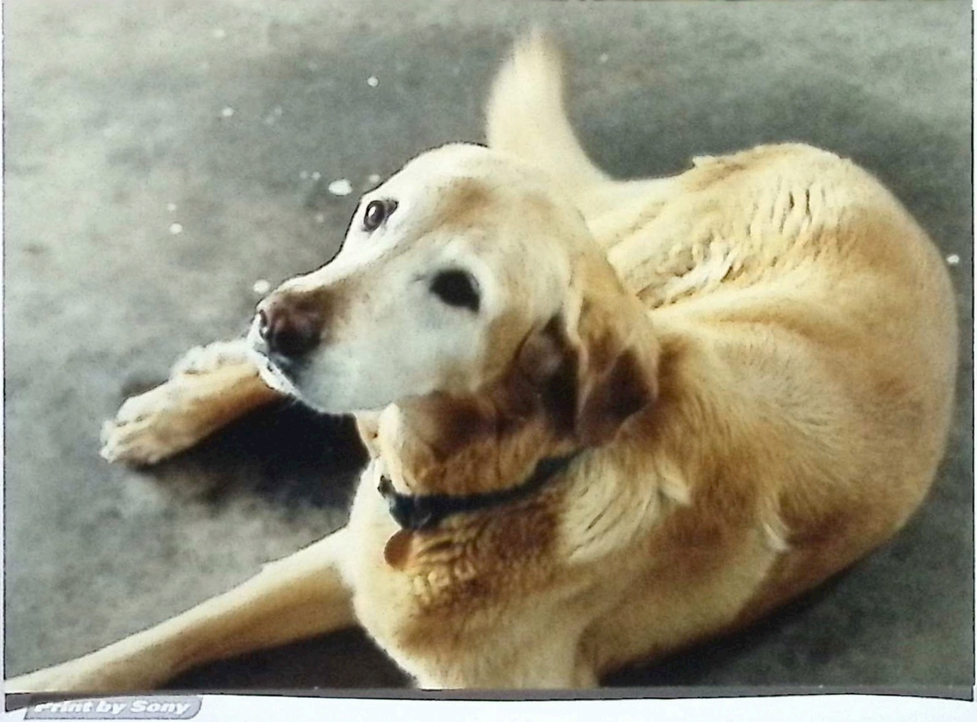
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LAURA KUHL
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VOLUNTEER SUPREME

MELANIE STEWART
LIBRARY ASSISTANT
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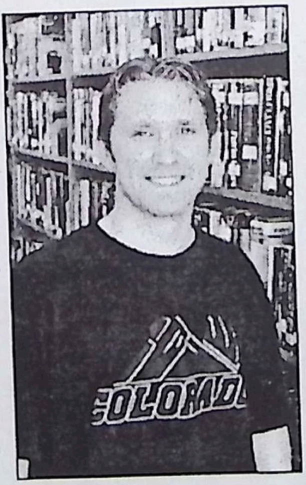

NATHAN PERRY
LIBRARY ASSISTANT

LISA BUSH
LIBRARY ASSISTANT

LENA SCHRODER
GREEN THUMB
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LIBRAR

Continued from page 16

Most items requested by a patron but not available in our collection may be acquired through Interlibrary Loan at a charge of 50¢ per item for postage.

Patron Policy

North Liberty, Johnson County and Open Access residents may be issued a computer patron number free of charge to use the North Liberty Community Library. Identification and proof of residence is required in our policy.

Library numbers may be issued to individuals or entire families. Children under 13

Fines and Overdue Materials

When possible, patrons will be notified by telephone on Thursday that they have overdue material. Written overdue notices will be sent once a month.

The library will be happy to send overdue notices via e-mail if the patron has an e-mail address and after a patron has signed an e-mail release.

A fine of 10 cents per day will be assessed to all overdue books, audio tapes, magazines and reference materials.

A fine of 50 cents per day will be assessed on all overdue videos.

A fine of $1.00 per day will be assessed to on all overdue, compact discs, DVDs, cake

cost of the material.

Fines are to be paid when materials are returned to the library.

If a patron has a fine of $2.50 or more, no checkouts will be allowed until the fine is paid.

Interlibrary loan overdues will be assessed at the same rate as regular Library material.

Arrangements may be made with a librarian to pay a fine by a method other than monetary.

General Information

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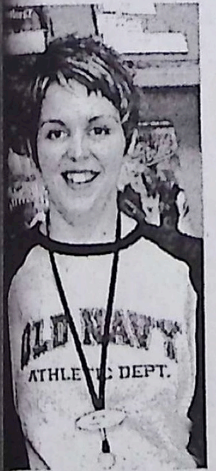

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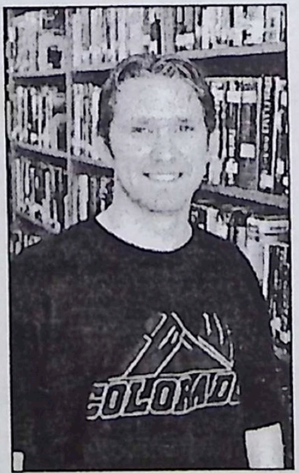

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Offering hope: Newbery winner Kate DiCamillo loves writing for children, young adults

Author to speak in North Liberty on Saturday

Kate DiCamillo sees the world through stories.

"I think it's how we all see the world to an extent," she said by phone from her home in Minnesota. "We are the story animal and I'm just plugging into that."

Thanks to DiCamillo's plugging in for the last two decades, young readers — and the young at heart — have been seeing the world through her many picture books, early readers and middle grade novels since "Because of Winn-Dixie," which was published in 2000.

Her latest book, "Louisiana's Way Home," actually follows the story of a character from a previous book — Raymie Nightingale, published in 2016 — which is a rare writing journey for DiCamillo. "Kids so want sequels and I understand it," she said. "It's a huge compliment because they don't want the book to end. I've gotten lots of letters asking me to write another book about this or that, but I've never felt compelled to do it before. This is one of those things where the character wouldn't go away. I kept writing down her voice, so I finally knuckled under and wrote it. I'm glad that I did."

Readers will be glad she did, too.

DiCamillo will be in North Liberty on Saturday to talk about "Louisiana's Way Home," which was just released in October. It tells the story of Louisiana Elefante whose granny wakes her up in the middle of the night to tell her that the day of reckoning has arrived and they have to leave home immediately. Separated from her best friends back in Florida, Louisiana wants to find a way back home, but soon finds her life becoming intertwined with the people of a small Georgia town — including a surly motel owner, a walrus-like minister, and a mysterious boy with a crow on his shoulder. It's a story about saying goodbyes and finding your way home, wherever and whatever that might be.

She looks forward to visiting Iowa again to meet with readers, DiCamillo said.

"It's taken me a long time to understand myself on this because I am an introvert and it has taken me a while to understand that connection," she said.

"Any time I have to walk out onto a stage, I think 'oh no, I can't do it.' But once I'm there with young readers and older readers, too, I think about how it completes the circle for me. You write the book alone and then here are the people that complete it for you. It's very moving to me to get to do that. I'm so looking forward to meeting everybody."

It's speaking events like the one on Saturday that help DiCamillo connect with the world around her.

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“My friends call me rigid, I like to say I am disciplined,” she said laughing when asked about her writing routine. “I get up really early in the morning while it’s still dark and it’s the first thing I do. I write just two pages, but I’ve found that if I just write two pages every day, it can become a novel in a year’s time.”

When she’s asked where she gets her story ideas, DiCamillo said she can never quite answer to anyone’s satisfaction.

“Part of it is paying attention to everything,” she said. “When I give advice to young writers and older writers I say, ‘Make sure you have a notebook with you and look at everything and listen.’ I’ll hear things like a line of dialogue that I think can become a story. I’ll see something. Sometimes things just pop into my head. I’ve learned to just be open to those things and write them down when they happen.”

Despite the fact she’s been the recipient of the Newbery Medal twice — for “Flora & Ulysses” in 2014 and “The Tale of Despereaux” in 2004 — and is a New York Times Bestseller many times over, she’s still amazed that she is an author.

“There’s still a part of me that is surprised that I got published, much less everything that has happened after it,” she said. “There’s always that disbelief and that gratitude that people are going read what you write and show up for a signing.”

DiCamllo first got her start writing short stories for adults, but soon found her way into writing for children.

“When you write for kids there is this necessary hope that needs to be in the story,” she said. “And there’s what I think of as a peripheral magic so that you can feel possibility always. What I like most in writing for kids, in addition to those letters that I get that say, ‘I hated to read until I read “Because of Winn-Dixie,”’ is how it changes me as a writer and makes me more hopeful. I love that.”

“And I just always hope with all my stories that people close the book and feel less alone, more hopeful.”

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As for DiCamillo, a National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Emerita through the Library of Congress, she hopes that readers just keep finding themselves in her books and that they keep reading.

“I’m grateful for everybody who reads to somebody else,” she said. “I’m such a big fan of people reading out loud and sharing stories.”

Book Reading

- What: Author Kate DiCamillo will read from and talk about her new book, “Louisiana’s Way Home”
- When: 11 a.m. Saturday

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Stan Lee, creator of superheroes, dies at 95

- Where: North Liberty Community Library, 520 W. Cherry St., North Liberty
- Cost: Free, but preregister at www.eventbrite.com/e/author-visit-kate-dicamillo-tickets-49703237722#tickets

Katie Mills Giorgio
correspondent

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